

Cities of tomorrow in 2010

By He Jianwei

Better City, Better Life is the theme of the World Expo 2010, running this May through October in Shanghai. Participants will explore the potential of urban life in the 21st century.

As of this year, 55 percent of the world's population lives in cities. The future of urban life concerns all nations and their people, regardless of their development level. Expo exhibits will explore eco-friendly and sustainable approaches to habitat, lifestyle and work in the new century.

This issue is a warm-up for the coming expo. It introduces the structures of the national pavilions and gives a window into future life as envisioned by the expo's participants.

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Suspension of print

Beijing Today publishes every Friday, 52 weeks a year. Because there are 53 weeks in 2010, Beijing Today's publication will be suspended until February 26.

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Returning to nature

Finland

'Kettle' a message to inspire



Teemu Kurkela, head of design team.

By Chu Meng

Finland's simple and neat pavilion could be mistaken for a big, white kettle. Its might seem chilling at first sign, but that is not the designer's intent.

The pavilion, called Kirnu, is designed by a team from JKMM, a Helsinki architectural office headed by Teemu Kurkela. The

collaboration Finland's expo slogan, "Sharing Inspiration."

Inspired by an island

"The pavilion can be seen as a miniature city built by Finns," the designer said. Its shape is aimed to create a vision of freedom, creativity and innovation.

The kettle rises like an island out of a pool of water, and is connected to the road by a bridge. At its heart is a miniature downtown and a forum for events.

Kurkela rented a small island near Helsinki during the pavilion design competition. An island represents the ideal getaway, he said, taking his team across the water for a retreat from city life.

"The aim was to quiet down and observe nature. The clouds in the sky form a constantly changing work of art. The stones on the shore are beautiful and perfect in their freedom of form. The water's mirror yields reflections and sensations of light. At a closer look, the surface texture of a fish is both ingenious and fascinating," he said.

The pool around the pavilion is that mirror of water, and its surface is covered in scale-like shingles. While the entrance may look small, it opens to an atrium revealing the sky and the clouds.

"Like nature, the pavilion offers a quiet escape from busy city life for anyone who wants to enter," he said.

Designing together

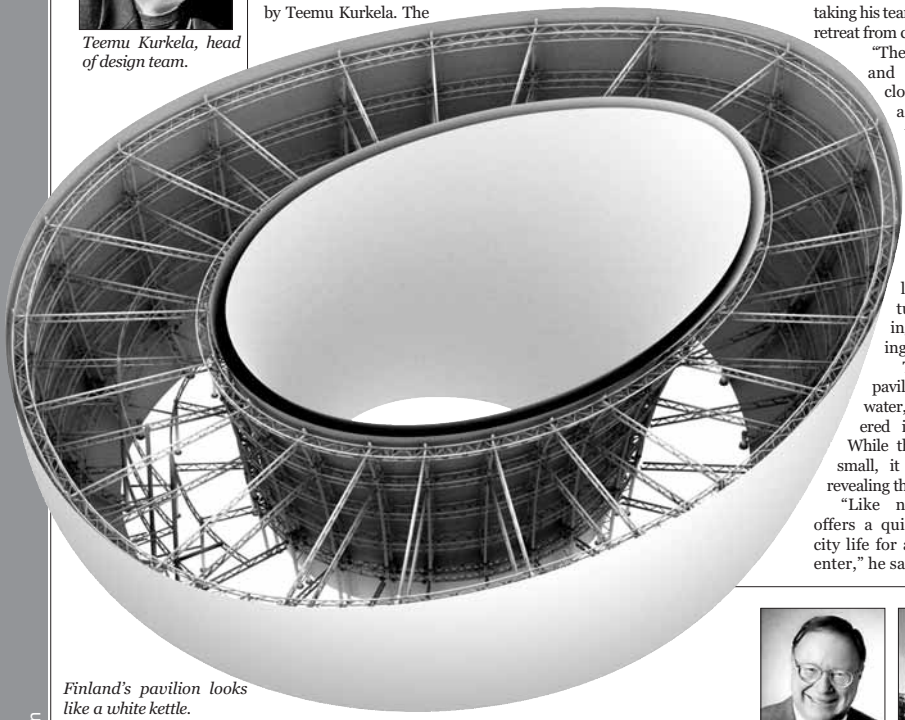
The interior of Kurkela's kettle was designed by nine young interior experts to make the Finland Pavilion usable for tourism. The designs came from the firms Muotohomo, Fantasiarakenne and Partanen Lamusuo Partnership, which came out on top at an expo design competition in Finland.

"Team Finland will exploit creative potential in its fullest," said Petri Ryyppy, operations manager for Finland at the Expo and one of the designers. "The design team for the 2010 Expo represents the top creative and diverse expertise in Finland," he said.

Muotohomo is a widely recognized design and communications company, Fantasiarakenne is an expert in set, fair, special constructions and lighting, and Partanen Lamusuo Partnership breaks the mold with its diverse and lauded plans, he said.

Good life

The pavilion projects an image of "Good Life," the six pillars of which are freedom, creativity, innovation, community spirit, health and nature. These pillars are integrated into the pavilion in its functional solutions. Its main shape represents the freedom and creativity in construction enabled by technology: innovation is introduced into the project in clarity and technical detail.

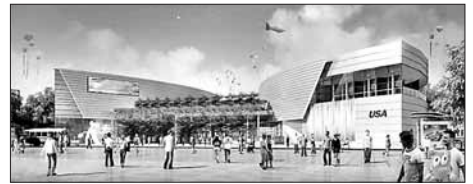


Finland's pavilion looks like a white kettle.

Photo provided by Finland Embassy

US

Nicholas S. Winslow, co-chairperson of the USA Pavilion



The US's pavilion is a "real building you can build in a city."

Photo provided by US Embassy

A green building that works

By Liang Meilan

The US Pavilion, ranked as the most anticipated according to a poll by Ogilvy and Mather Brown ACSR, is nearing completion.

"With more than 85 percent of the construction costs (416 million yuan) raised, construction of the US Pavilion is proceeding smoothly and will be finished by April 20," said Nicholas S. Winslow, co-chairperson of the USA Pavilion, the nonprofit group taking charge of the effort.

"The building will be ready in five weeks: after that we will install the exhibits."

Winslow said the US pavilion is a "real building you can build in a city." While it escaped the grip of dome fetishists, its angular, shiny shell contrasts with the organic and traditional architecture of its neighbors. "There are some pavilions that chose to be fanciful, more like a sculpture. But this is a working building," Winslow said.

The pavilion is a low-rise, two-story,

energy efficient structure, and many of its components will be recycled or reused after the expo.

"There is a canopy of trees by the entrance to our building. Trees cover all over and serve to welcome visitors into our city. They will be complemented by a waterfall generated from a rainwater-fed pool. The landscaping will reflect the wide variety of climates and terrains in the US," Winslow said.

The second floor will have an urban farm modeled on the one First Lady Michelle Obama built at the White House. Some of the farm produce will be used for catering in the VIP lounge.

This low-tech aspect of the green building sets the US pavilion apart from its technical and mechanical neighbors, Winslow said.

"This is how we would design an urban building in any US city, and it shows what China should do in the future," Clive Grout, designer of the US Pavilion, said. "It's a

model for high-density, low-rise development in cities. We have a very prominent site and it is the US Pavilion. People will find it. We don't see the point of architectural handstands to get attention."

From the distance, the building appears shaped like an eagle: one of the symbols of America. "The two wings that surround either side of the urban forest are the wings that welcome in guests. It is basically an allegory of the US," Winslow said.

The interior of the US Pavilion will feature a multimedia guest experience, themed "Rising to the Challenge," produced by BRC Imagination Arts, a company famous for its General Motors "Spirit Lodge" pavilion at Vancouver Expo '86.

"It will not be a trade show. It will be an opportunity for America to show itself to the world," Winslow said. "It will emphasize values shared by China and the US: urban sustainability, health, teamwork and the Chi-

nese-American community."

The show will explore "Better City, Better Life" by telling a story through the voice of a Chinese-American woman living in the year 2030, who was a visitor to the Shanghai expo in 2010. Her life as portrayed in 2030 reflects the 20 years after the catalyst, and celebrates teamwork, ethnic diversity and the accomplishments of the Chinese-American community.

"We are using the power of Hollywood storytelling – the kind of thing we do pretty well – to make sure our visitors and guests remember their visit," Winslow said.

"We really hope guests who go to our pavilion will come out of it with a much better understanding of what the US is, what its people are like, why it is really important that China and America have good and close relations, and that Americans are hard working, energetic and creative people."

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Romania

Slice of a green apple



Viorel Isticioiaia,
ambassador of
Romania

By Wang Yu

It's hard to miss the big green apple with a slice hacked out of it in Zone C of the Shanghai Expo grounds.

That is Romania's pavilion.

"The design is sort of our answer to the problems of living in a modern city – the desire to get back to nature," Viorel Isticioiaia, ambassador of Romania, said.

"In Romania, one-third of the country is in the mountains. Those areas have many orchards and vineyards, and fruit production is one of the cornerstones

of the economy. That's why the apple has a special value to the Romanian people and we see it as a symbol of the environment," Isticioiaia said.

The pavilion's design competition for the structure, "Exchange of ideas," held in 2008 was won by SC M&C Strategy Development. The apple-shaped pavilion was the work of its 21-year-old female designer.

On the top of the building is a placard with the pavilion's name "Greenopolis" from the Latin "polis" meaning city. Its name represents health, knowledge, freshness, temptation and eternity.

The apple is divided in two parts: the apple is the main body and the missing slice is the sec-

ondary. The structure, built in cooperation with a Chinese construction company, was only recently finished.

The interior is a generous five floors. Floor one has the administrative office and a dressing room for performers. The second floor is a mixed space dedicated to outdoor cultural events. Visitors can try traditional Romanian foods and drinks at the restaurant on the third floor. A conference room is on the fourth floor and the building is capped off by a panoramic platform on the fifth.

The slice houses a coffee shop and an exhibition hall. The outdoor space, with its terraced lawn, is the place for visitors to take a breather. The pavilion will host music, films, dance and theater performances and exhibition of art and design. Conferences and seminars dedicated to developing economic, scientific and tourist exchange will also be held.

"We hope to show our link to nature and the Romanian lifestyle of embracing the wild. During the competition for who would get to host this Expo we voted for Shanghai. It wasn't just because we have a good relationship with China: the Beijing Olympics gave us confidence," the ambassador said.

Franck Serrano,
curator of the
French Pavilion



French

Romance tickles the senses

By Han Manman

France, home to seven World Expos since 1855, is the Shanghai Expo's heaviest investor with a €50 million (\$52 million yuan) pavilion that says "romance."

The pavilion, also known as "The Sensual City," is modeled on utopian romance and tantalizes the five senses, Franck Serrano, curator of the pavilion, says.

The square pavilion is located beside the Huangpu River and houses a large garden and pool. Its walls, covered by plants, create an illusion of floating in water, Serrano says.

French architect Jacques Ferrier supplied the design. After evaluating 50 proposals, Ferrier's revolutionary design – centered around the grandest vertical garden ever – was selected.

Serrano describes the French Pavilion as floating in a rhyme with water. The structure is "wrapped into" a wire mesh made of a new type of concrete, with plants for walls.

The selection of plants fits the pavilion and the soil requirement of Shanghai, as well as climate change during the Expo.

When the French garden designers first came to China they brought photos of the plants they wanted to include in the garden: more than 60 were available. Plants were raised from seedlings and then moved into the pavilion.

The gardens communicate what the designers hope can be

a new urban harmony between people and nature, Serrano says.

The central garden is cooled by small fountains: it's a place for visitors to enjoy birdsongs, fragrant flowers and delicious foods. The garden's surroundings are permeated by French ambience.

Scent is another important part of the pavilion. Visitors can smell the roses of the "Palace of Versailles" and the cream rolls of French cafes. "It is a trip for the senses," Serrano said.

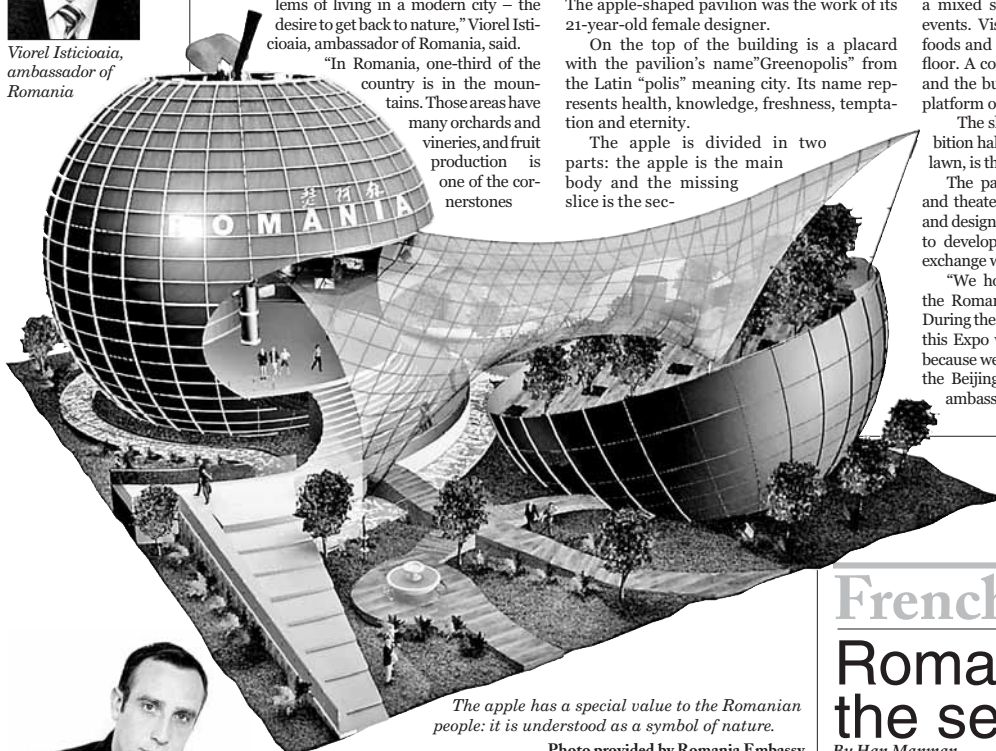
Art lovers can enjoy seven representative pieces loaned out by the Parisian Musee d'Orsay in Paris, known as "the most beautiful museum in Europe," Serrano says.

Masterpieces – each valued at more than €100 million are making their longest trip outside France for this Expo, Serrano says.

Specific works include the paintings "The Angelus", by Millet, "The Balcony", by Manet, "Woman with Coffee Pot", by Cezanne, and "The Dance Hall in Arles", by Van Gogh; as well as Rodin's sculpture "The Age of Bronze."

"Out of the 10 best masterpieces from this great museum, seven will be in China for six months," Serrano says. "These treasures have been individually exhibited in New York and Tokyo, but have never left France together."

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The apple has a special value to the Romanian people: it is understood as a symbol of nature.

Photo provided by Romania Embassy



G.G. Kirchner, chief architect
of Luxembourg Pavilion

Luxembourg

Castle within the city

By Wang Yu

Construction of the Luxembourg Pavilion began almost immediately after Hermann & Valentiny and Partners won the design competition at the end of 2007.

The Expo motto – Better City, Better Life – and China itself provided the inspiration for the country's design. Its pavilion consists of two major parts: an enclosure and a tower in the courtyard of the enclosure.

Main visitor areas are located in the enclosure, including a main exhibition space and a restaurant. Technical facilities are also located in the enclosure.

"The pavilion is a monolithic sculptural form that reflects Luxembourg in miniature: its permeability mirrors global exchange and communication," said G.G. Kirchner, chief architect of the Shanghai construction project.

Luxembourg is rendered in Chinese as "lusenbao", which means forest and castle. That too is reflected in the pavilion's design as an open castle in green surroundings.

The complex surrounds a 20-meter-high tower with a very abstract, clearly "exaggerated" facade that recalls images of the traditional Luxembourg single-family house. The way the tower is contained in

a rectangle formed by a castle wall with large openings allows an unimpeded flow of visitors.

The tower has a VIP floor with salons for special events and a fold-out balcony.

The space between the tower and the wall is densely planted to embody the country's reputation as the green heart of Europe.

"In the beginning, the concept for the pavilion was totally different. The design was very abstract – we just used diagonal walls to create a room – like a Richard Serra sculpture," Kirchner said.

Like many pavilions by other countries that are concerned about the environment, the Luxembourg Pavilion uses two materials: CORTEN steel for the facade, the floor and the roof, and timber for the interior walls and ceiling.

"All the materials are untreated. Except for the ceiling, on which we put a fireproof coating at the request of the Expo bureau," Kirchner said. The exhibition area uses a special "climate concept" air-conditioning system designed to save energy.



The castle of Luxembourg is partly inspired by the country's Chinese name.

Photo provided by Luxembourg Embassy



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UK

Celebrate the seeds of life

By He Jianwei

The UK has always put forward a striking pavilion, ever since its Crystal Palace at the first Expo in London in 1851.

This year its centerpiece is the Seed Cathedral. "The Seed Cathedral captures everything that represents UK innovation, creativity, advanced technology and nature," Thomas Heatherwick, one of the country's leading creative talents, said.

"Rather than being a straightforward advert for the UK, we want our pavilion to give each person a more profound understanding of the richness of contemporary UK culture. Nothing has more potential than seeds," Heatherwick said.

The seed is the origin of everything, so his team acquired 60,000 seeds from the Kew Millennium Seed Bank. Each seed is stored inside an acrylic rod, modulated on the amber-encased mosquito of Jurassic Park, and those rods form a six-story structure.

By day, each rod acts like

fiber-optic filament, using daylight to illuminate the interior: by night, interior lighting is used to make each rod – and the whole structure – seem to glow.

The pavilion itself looks like a piece of paper once used to wrap the building and now unfolded on the site.

The interior contains a unique visual representation of the UK's role in conservation: Kew's Millennium Seed Bank, the largest collection of wild plant seeds in the world. The seeds inside each transparent rod give visitors a chance to see the seeds of the wild plants so essential to global conservation efforts.

Seeds were sourced from the Germplasm Bank of Wild Species, Kunming Institute of Botany, The Chinese Academy of Sciences and Kew's Millennium Seed Bank, a partner of the Royal Botanical Gardens. Seeds used in the display were taken only from the most plentiful stocks.

It is a stunning image of the potential for life.

"Seeds in the rods are like dinosaurs trapped in amber," he said. "We can protect the future of mankind and the environment by harnessing the power of nature through seeds."

The Seed Cathedral can be reached by a series of walkways, each representing a UK city's role in the past, present and the future.

The UK, with its millions of gardens, thousands of public parks and garden squares, has pioneered the integration of nature parks, gardens, lakes, canals and ponds into cities as

a way of making them healthier places to live and work.

The country's Expo journey celebrates "greenness" and reflects on the profound importance of maintaining a connection with the natural world to understand its ability to bring about solutions for health and well-being.

The pavilion is a reflection of the UK's urban landscape: it encourages visitors to consider how nature can be applied to relieve the social, economic and environmental challenges of the world.



Thomas Heatherwick, chief architect

The Seed Cathedral captures UK innovation, creativity, advanced technology and nature.

CFP Photo



Sparkling facade of the Swiss Pavilion

By Han Manman

For the Shanghai Expo, the Swiss tried many challenging ideas never before done: exterior tiles with solar cells in a soybean resin and a chair lift to carry visitors spiraling up a shaft.

Their pavilion's design theme – rural and urban interaction – is based on the balance rooted in yin and yang.

A vast planted roof and two load-bearing cylinders form the main structure and are connected by a revolving chair lift. The architecture synthesizes town and country: a perfect balance of man, nature and technology, said Manuel Salchli, director of the Swiss Pavilion.

"In Switzerland, there is a strong awareness of the importance of interaction between urban and rural areas due to geographical characteristics," he said.

"China, the host country of the Shanghai Expo, has a long and rich cultural history which provided continuous inspiration to us," Salchli said, noting how Chinese yin and yang fit the design.

"Rural and urban areas are complementary yet opposing, but their combination ensures a balance between society and nature. A regular and healthy interaction between the rural and urban is a prerequisite

site for sustainable and harmonious development in ecological, economic and social aspects," he said.

"For Switzerland, 'Better City, Better Life' means clean air and water, efficient public transportation and sustainable construction," he said, adding that the country will present Swiss solutions and successful cases to the world at the expo.

"We hope it can inspire visitors to create an even better future," Salchli said.

One of the major highlights of the pavilion is the chair lift, he said. Visitors can ride up the cylinder to the soothing sounds of nature for a four-minute trip over the planted roof.

Covered by a green meadow, plants and flowers, the roof is an open, bright and peaceful landscape and beautiful natural space.

"The chair lift provides a link between the urban space and the natural space of the Swiss Pavilion. It takes visitors out of the demanding, urban environment and into a relaxing rural setting, then back again," he said.

Salchli said the sparkling facade that envelops the pavilion is a curtain of woven aluminum that produces what appear to be random flashes.

Switzerland

Balancing city, meadow in pavilion design



Manuel Salchli, director of the Swiss Pavilion



A chair lift is the major highlight of the Swiss Pavilion.

Photos provided by Swiss Embassy

The light comes from 11,000 solar cells and the energy is made visible as white flashes triggered by the Pavilion surroundings, Salchli said.

"This is intended to demonstrate the 'environmental influences' around the Swiss Pavilion and to make visitors aware of these influences," he said. Each cell has a map of Switzerland,

making the Pavilion a "Swiss" drape.

"It's difficult to put things into action and bring the unknown to life. But everybody worked hard because we knew it was a once in a lifetime opportunity to be part of this," Salchli said.

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Spain

Wicker bridges of China, Spain

By Chu Meng

Wicker is one of the most familiar materials for traditional handicrafts. But it could be tough to imagine a wicker basket becoming space for thousands of visitors.

The Spanish Basket, Spain's pavilion at the Shanghai Expo, does it thanks to the designer Benedetta Tagliabue.

The Pavilion, costing €18 million (168 million yuan), is based on the theme "From the city of our parents, to the city of our children." It is one of the largest at the Expo, next to the US, France, the UK, Germany, and Italy.

Ancient wicker tradition

"Like China, Spain is a country rich with traditional wicker weaving handicrafts and techniques," said Benedetta

Tagliabue, a 40-year-old Italian-born designer. "Wicker-made goods can be found everywhere in our lives. I'm always inspired by the beauty and purity of the material, and wanted to use it for our pavilion."

She said the Spanish Pavilion reflects the country's concern with ecology and sustainability with an environmentally-friendly wicker exterior.

Tagliabue was born in Milan and graduated from the University of Venice in 1989. Two years later, she joined architect Enric Miralles's studio (EMBT), where she worked and married two years later. During her EMBT partnership she completed several high profile buildings in Barcelona and across Europe.

In 1998, EMBT won a competition to design the New Scottish Par-

liament. Tagliabue became joint project director, finishing the Parliament in 2004 and winning several top awards despite Miralles' death in 2000.

Building for the future

The Spanish Pavilion has a steel frame with a wicker exterior. Craftsmen wove patterns into the building using different colors of waterproofed wicker.

"The front of the pavilion will be covered in wicker to display its technical potential, but behind that is a framework of steel tubes that allow daylight to filter in from between the wicker strands," she said.

Tagliabue said the challenge of building a pavilion from wicker was an excellent opportunity to show how advanced Spanish architecture is in creativity and technical skill. The design is intended to reflect Spain's climate while using the age-

old craft of basketmaking and new construction techniques to fashion a futuristic building.

"The reinterpretation of the traditional by using advanced technologies has become a hallmark of Spanish pavilions at recent Expos," Tagliabue said, noting how the style reflects the country's commitment to sustainability.

From parents to children

The pavilion is a backward glance to a time when Spain saw a great exodus from country to the city - what China faces today. It looks to the past and the present to make visitors think about what kind of cities their children will inherit.

"We will show the Chinese public that Spanish cities have evolved during the past decades, and how we are preserving a rich historical heritage and growing in a sustainable manner for the benefit of future generations," said Javier Conde de



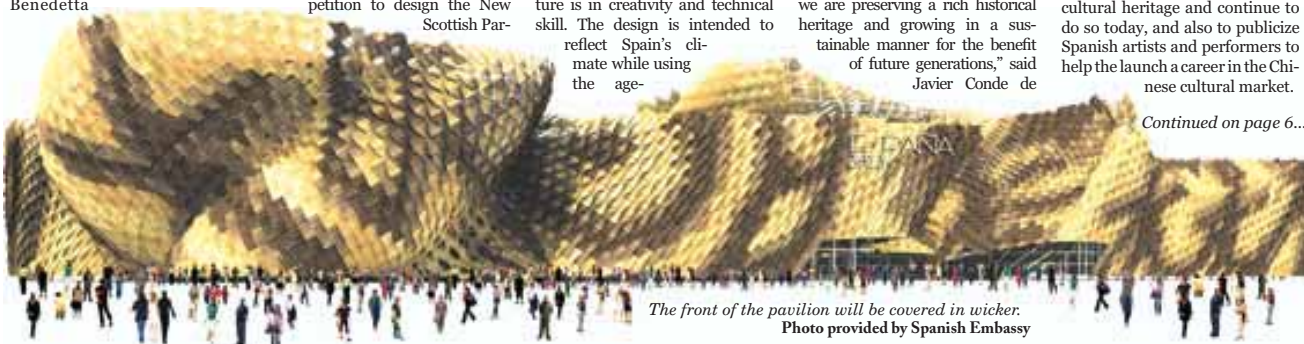
Benedetta Tagliabue, designer of Spanish Pavilion.

Saro, Spain's commissioner general for the World Expo Shanghai.

The commissioner said the pavilion will have open squares for cultural performances and an indoor area for exhibitions and cafeterias.

The pavilion hopes to show Chinese visitors that Spain is a nation with a long cultural tradition, whose artists and works have added much to the world's cultural heritage and continue to do so today, and also to publicize Spanish artists and performers to help the launch a career in the Chinese cultural market.

Continued on page 6...



The front of the pavilion will be covered in wicker. Photo provided by Spanish Embassy

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Australia



Roger Woods (front)

Australia's pavilion was one of the first pavilions that began construction in 2008.

Photos provided by Roger Woods

Imagining a better future

By Zhao Hongyi

Australia's pavilion displays how to better live in a balance between the urban construction and nature environment, with the theme "ImagiNation: Smart solutions for urban future."

The first floor, a 160-meter-long glass-enclosed ramp that wraps around and penetrates the exterior, leads visitors past six exhibitions as they enter the heart of the pavilion.

The 1,000-man amphitheater forms the main show room, and the entire pavilion can accommodate 40,000.

Outside the theater is the main atrium, an area with foods, beverages and goods along with an

elevated gallery stage where visitors can enjoy cultural performances.

The pavilion also has a VIP space overlooking the atrium. It is designed for business seminars, networking events, lunches and dinners.

The first part of the pavilion, called "Journey," grants visitors a basic understanding of Australia and its cultural diversity. Pictures and interactive exhibits profile the country's landscape and territories and tell the stories of its people.

A ramp leads visitors to the second part: "Discovery," a theatrical show that explores the country's major cities, tourist destinations, economic dynamism, cultural diversity and high living standard.

Daily performances will be staged in "Dream," the last part of the pavilion. Visitors will be invited to taste Australian cuisine, sip fine red wines and buy Australian products.

Artists will show sculpt

tures and paintings in the pavilion to bring native culture from Down Under. The screen shows a film telling a new story of Australia.

About 160 people will provide bilingual services for Chinese visitors in the pavilion.

Peter Sams is the director coordinating the construction and is stationed in Shanghai. He might be the most famous Australian these next months.

On January 15, President Hu Jintao inspected the progress of the expo's construction progress in Shanghai. Sams met Hu and promised the Australian Pavilion would be a success.

"We have finished the construction and are arranging the exhibits," Sams said this week.

The Australian Pavilion was one of the first pavilions that began construction in 2008. Sams' Shanghai office has 35 employees: when the Expo begins, it will have 300, he said.

Australians have also created a mascot, Peng Peng, for their pavilion. The cheeky and bold kookaburra and its distinctive laugh makes the bird popular all over the world. Peng Peng's name means grand sky, a nod to the island nation's hopes for better ties with China.

"Our combination of design, skill and audio and video technology is something you can only find at the Shanghai Expo 2010," Sams said.

During the Expo, the Australian pavilion will host between 200 and 250 events: senior official and trade delegation meetings, business symposiums and investment promotions, said Lyndall Sachs, commissioner general of the Australian government in Canberra.

Norway

Touching nature

By Wang Yu

Like many others, the Norwegian Pavilion is built to reflect the country's interest in the relationship between the modern city and the environment.

Innovation Norway, a state-owned company, built the pavilion. When in Norway, it promotes nationwide industrial development and helps release the potential of districts and regions by contributing toward innovation, internationalization and promotion, Arild Blixrud, commissioner general of Norway, said.

The company hosted a competition on behalf of the Norwegian government in which Helen and Hard Architects won the bid to develop the Norwegian pavilion. "The pavilion itself focuses on nature's close relationship with the city, and is built as a park with 15 model trees and different recreational landscapes," Siv Helene Stangeland, from the architectural studio, said.

The roof rises and falls dramatically, giving off images of the ocean, coastline, mountains or glaciers depending on the eye and imagination of the visitor.

Visitors will see and experience various Norwegian life at the pavilion through

Expo performances by Norwegian musicians and dancers.

Inside the pavilion, it is clear the roots of each tree plays a role in the building's foundation. Each tree has four branches and varies from five to 15 meters in height. The trees are made of laminated wood, a technology widely used in Norway. Then they were imported into China and assembled in Shanghai.

Norway's is the only pavilion at the Expo, built completely out of faux wood.

"China has a tradition of using wood in construction. This wood is a sustainable material and by using it to build the Norwegian Pavilion, Norway is inviting China to re-explore the use of wood in load-bearing structures," Blixrud said.

However, this material is not new to Expo use: in 1958 in Brussels, Norway built a pavilion of laminated wood designed by famous architect Sverre Fehn.

Urban life and urban challenges are a World Expo theme for the first time.

As of this year, more than half the world is living in the cities.

Blixrud said Norway has few big cities, but each shares one quality: they exist and develop in harmony with nature.



Arild Blixrud

Italy's urban model preserves history while attending to overdue renewal.

Italy

Italy's city for the future

By He Jianwei

Seen from above, Italy's Pavilion resembles the start of a game of pick-up stick. At first glance, everything looks scattered in an odd pile – but each section of the building is geometrically symbolic of Italy's complex mesh of regional cultures.

Its theme is "City of Man": an urban model that combined overdue renewal with the need to preserve history.

Actually, that spirit captures elements common to both ancient Chinese and Italian cities: the need for a simpler life where humans improve their world in a way both sustainable and safe for the environment.

The towering pavilion provides a rich display of Italian expertise in urban improvement like engineering, architecture, social services, urban development, architecture, and culture.

Italian-made products have long been synonymous with having a piece of "the good life," and this six-month exhibition will bolster that perception.

The pavilion is built like bio-climatic "machine" to save energy. Power-generating elements embedded in the glass block out radiation while providing energy to light up spaces.

Three sides of it are decorated by a film of water that reflects the structure and highlights its natural shimmer. That brilliance is reproduced through slits of new transparent cement, which cast light evocative of the narrow alleys between city buildings.

The diverse materials on opposite sites of the building lend the structure a twofold architectural effect: one creating an interior scene of a lively evening party and the other a bright, day-lit atmosphere.

"The element of light is fundamental and is highlighted by the materials used – especially the transparent cement, which filters the light and, like alabaster, giving the place a strength and narrative power," said Franco Purini, a professor of architecture who voted for it at the International Ideas Competition for the Italian Pavilion.



CFP Photo



Franco Purini



Norway's pavilion is built of wood.

Photos provided by Innovation Norway

Designs for better city, life

Singapore

Urban symphony

What inspires Singapore's Tan Kay Ngee?



Tan Kay Ngee, designer of the Singapore Pavilion

By Annie Wei

Located in Zone B, the Oceania and South-east Asia section of Pudong, the Singapore Pavilion will showcase the country's achievements in urban planning, water and environmental services and promote closer ties with China. It will also highlight the city-state's ability to offer an integrated environment in which to live, work and play.

Singapore said its design by Tan Kay Ngee was selected for architectural merit, energy-saving innovations and excellent design concept.

The pavilion, themed Urban Symphony, was inspired by a harmony of unique elements in Singapore: progress and sustainability, urbanization and greenery, tradition and modernity and the different races living together in harmony, Tan said.

Water and gardens make up the pavilion's landscape: a nod to Singapore's balancing of progress with sustainability.

The ground floor of the pavilion will show projected images, live theater performances and activities within the atrium space and main hall. Singaporean exhibits will also be displayed along the ramp up to the next floor.

The spacious column-free second floor will host an amphitheater screening videos about Singapore's creativity, cultural diversity and natural beauty.

"The Singapore Pavilion is

designed to resemble a music box," Tan said.

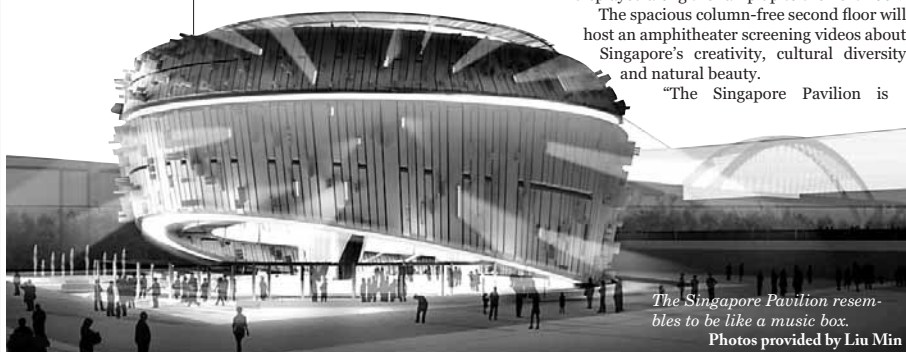
"Urban Symphony is a way to articulate Singapore's rhythm and beat through the water fountain movements, window and sunshade fins on the facade, the interplay of sounds and visuals on different levels and a melange of flora on the roof garden."

The entire pavilion is supported by four columns, symbolizing Singapore's races living, working and playing happily on the same ground. Ramps and stairs suspended off trusses lead to the upper floors.

Sustainable and environmentally-friendly designs are gaining ground the world over. Tan said the pavilion's design incorporates sustainable elements such as facade slits for air circulation and running chilled on the ground floor to reduce the cost of air-conditioning. It also uses recyclable building materials like aluminum and steel.

Tan highly recommended the Garden in the Sky, a rooftop garden of tropical flora to capture the beauty of living in a garden city.

A new orchid hybrid was created to commemorate Singapore's participation in the World Expo 2010. Named the Dendrobium Singapore Shanghai Symphony, the striking jade and gold orchid is adorned with delicate parallel veins, symbolizing the beauty of Singapore and Shanghai and the two cities' transformation into vibrant global destinations.



The Singapore Pavilion resembles to be like a music box.
Photos provided by Liu Min

Sweden

Innovation sustains society

By Zhang Dongya

Sweden is known for novel inventions like the ATM machine, safety matches, ball bearings and the refrigerator. At the Shanghai Expo 2010, it carries forward that spirit of innovation and ties it to sustainability.

The Swedish Pavilion is shaped like a large square quartered by a cross: a recreation of the Swedish national flag. Three sections represent urban areas and the fourth is an open-air terrace representing nature.

SWECO, a Swedish architectural firm established over 50 years ago, designed this year's pavilion. The firm has worked in China on sustainable urban development since 2001, and has helped create many new architectural concepts.

Three keywords were established as Expo cornerstones: innovation, sustainability and communication. These were further developed into Sweden's theme for the Expo: the Spirit of Innovation.

The theme seeks to capture Sweden's desire to solve problems, improve the urban environment and demonstrate the importance of communication under a new technological situation.

"Both nature and the city conveyed in the pavilion are sources of inspiration and innovation," Christer Stenmark, project manager and team leader, said. "The building is designed to offer surprising meetings with innovative perspectives and to deliver a social content that demonstrates openness and interaction."

Symbolizing the city, the pavilion facade is made of perforated metal and patterned to resemble the street plan of downtown Stockholm, Sweden's capital. The inner walls are decorated with scenic images from the countryside.

"The design is founded on this three-way relationship. We used urban-rural interaction as a starting point and developed a concept based on a meeting between the city, man and nature. We believe that making the leap to sustainable society and a 'Better city, Better life' demands creativity in developing innovative solutions that enable city, nature and man to grow together," Stenmark said.

"It will convey a promise that we are committed to making the world a better place for the next generation," he said.

Canada

Theater the core of Canada's pavilion

By Chu Meng

The Canada Pavilion, with a budget of CA \$45 million (286 million yuan), is among the Shanghai Expo's largest. Its exhibition is "The Living City: Inclusive, Sustainable, Creative."

Unlike many pavilions at the expo, the Canadian government passed the task of creativity and innovation to the private Cirque du Soleil, a company known for its fantastic theaters and cross-cultural performances.

"Cirque du Soleil is often called Canada's best-known cultural export and it will be responsible for the Canada Pavilion. Why does the pavilion have to be designed by an architect? Anyone can do it if it interprets the spirit of its nation. We all trust in Cirque du Soleil," said Jean Heon, spokesman for the Department of Canadian Heritage.

The pavilion is shaped like a large letter "C" which stands for "Canada" and also "creativity." The pavilion wraps around a public square to say the Canadian people are the ones who make its cities great.

The pavilion is divided into areas for the public, for entertaining special guests and for administration. Visitors enter through the open-air public square, which includes a performance space to show off the best of Canadian entertainment. After passing the square, they pass through the larger structure with public presentations.

Part of the pavilion's exterior walls will be covered by a special kind of greenery, and rainwater collected by a drainage system is used inside the pavilion.

The pavilion exterior features Canadian red cedar and eco-energy technology and practices



The Canada Pavilion is shaped like a letter C.

Photo provided by Duan Yan

to maximize efficiency. The designers created an eco-energetic envelope with sun breakers, a white roof membrane and green walls to reduce heat islands.

Canada's theme for Expo 2010 was developed through cross-Canada, face-to-face discussions with 150 organizations and individuals, industry associations, federal, provincial and municipal governments, ethno-cultural communities and experts from tourism, media and cultural industries, Heon said.

Canada's cities are built on values of democratic self expression and participation, reflect linguistic and multicultural diversity, respect the equality and the rights of individuals and are safe, tolerant communities.

Its sustainable cities strive to balance the needs of people and the environment, including the interdependence of rural and urban life.

Its creative cities are modern, vibrant, prosperous hubs of innovation and creativity where talent and knowledge in technology, business, science and the arts interconnect, making them ideal places in which to visit, study, work and live.

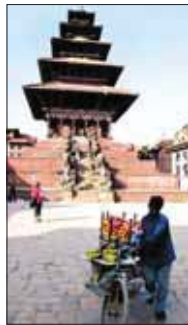


Desirable cities in

By Zhang Dongya

Designers and officials from hundreds of countries have brought their interpretation of "Better City, Better Life" to the Shanghai Expo. To better understand their perspective, we tried to find out. They also expounded on their ideas of what it means to be a "good city" amid the challenges of the 21st century.

Ancient heritage amid nature



Bhaktapur in Nepal

By Li Zhixin

Narendra Mool, 37, an engineer of Nepal's pavilion, was born and grew up in Bhaktapur. It is an ancient town on the eastern Kathmandu Valley, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site for its rich cultural traditions, old temples and ancient wood, metal and stone art.

"Festivals and cultural ceremonies are celebrated almost every week," he says. "People from generation to generation attach great importance to preserving cultural heritage – this is the most beautiful and endearing thing about my city." He says he especially loves Bhaktapur's ancient sites and its proximity to nature.

Mool believes each city should have its own identity, but most of all, residents should have a sense of ownership. "Residents need to love it and preserve its cultural heritage. People should love their cities just as they love their own home and keep them clean. Most of all, peace enriches the quality of life." He describes the relationship among the residents of Bhaktapur as resembling that of a huge family.

Long garden tradition

By He Jianwei

Britain's biggest contributions to improving urban living are garden squares, public parks and window boxes, said Thomas Heatherwick, chief designer of the UK Pavilion. In the British mind, there is profound value in maintaining a direct connection with nature, Heatherwick said.

"One great building does not make a great city. Everyone is saying, let's have a new concert hall or a new museum, but that way you just end up looking like you are pretending to be Bilbao or Barcelona," he said.

"The garden, carefully tended for the delight of fellow citizens, is a wonderful British contribution to the pleasure and civility of urban life," the designer said, adding that Britain's urban and suburban gardens are among the richest and most diverse in the nation.

A city with soul

By Zhang Dongya

Masood Khan, the Pakistani ambassador and commissioner general of Pakistan's pavilion, was born in a mountain village. He later moved to the capital, Islamabad. Khan says there are many standards for a "good city," but the most important is that it should "be safe" and "have a soul."

"A city must have a soul. A city without music, culture, good restaurants and parks would be completely dull and barren. Most importantly, cities should be safe. Modern urban settings are prone to crime, disease and deprivation. City leadership should ensure that there is a mechanism to fight crime and disease and to come to the rescue of the vulnerable and disadvantaged," he says.

Khan describes Islamabad as "an excellent city." Its layout is well designed, its traffic flows in an orderly manner and it has bustling shopping malls, he says. Not least, it is nestled in the bosom of nature: a valley ringed by hills.

But Khan acknowledges that the modern, 40-year-old city lacks "traditional character." "This is being remedied by the city leadership. Now, you gradually see traditional architecture and monuments springing up," he says. Islamabad was built to become the home of top government officials, civil servants, diplomats and their families. It has since become an economic and cultural center, drawing businesspeople and artists from home and abroad.

The ambassador thinks no city will ever compare to the place of one's childhood, since it holds deep emotional associations, but people migrate to cities out of necessity: for better jobs or better business opportunities. Therefore, he says, there are minimum, universal expectations of modern cities.

"The quality of life in a city is directly proportional to the facilities available to citizens as well as an efficient and effective management. When a city grows into a metropolis or a megapolis, it needs mass transit so people can reach their workplaces and homes quickly, safely and at a low cost. Such urban transport systems also have to be environment-friendly. But the first condition is that these systems must be fully functional and reliable," Khan says.

"Good cities have good housing, which should cater to the needs of all segments of society – from low income families to the richest individuals. And they should not ignore the needs of the middle class, which in most cases constitute the bulk of the city population."

Khan says Beijing is one of the best cities he has ever lived in. He also commends Shanghai's urban design, describing it as "a shining city upon a hill." "It's a modern marvel, elegant and aesthetically designed. It has both soul and spirit."

Khan also lauds Manhattan, New York, and Geneva, Switzerland. Manhattan for being rich, splendid and friendly; and Geneva for striking a balance between urban and rural life, and between aesthetics and utilitarianism.

Connection between people and the environment



Oslo in Norway

By Wang Yu

Arild Blixrud, commissioner general of Norway's Pavilion, lives in Oslo, Norway's capital and largest city. It is also the country's cultural, scientific and economic center.

"Our city is very close to the sea and the woods, so blue and green are the two main colors of the city," Blixrud says.

Oslo's metropolitan area has a population of 1.4 million and about 870,000 live in satellite cities. The population is growing at a rate of more than 2 percent annually, making Oslo one of the fastest-growing cities in Europe.

"I think it's very important to focus on the relationship between people and the environment, to fuse people's lives with nature," he says, adding that Norway hopes to share with China its eco-friendly practices, new technology and social welfare system.

Nature, convenient public transport and cultural traditions are key

By Liang Meilan

Nicholas Winslow, co-chair of the US Pavilion, is a seasoned consultant – his clients included Warner Bros, where he worked for seven years. He lives in Los Angeles, California, and adores the city's weather.

"We have absolutely wonderful weather. But it's very spread out ... I'm not sure we should design cities like that anymore," said Winslow, also citing LA's burgeoning population and aging public transportation system.

He says his ideal city is one that is "green," dotted by trees and parks, and has convenient public transport. "The problem of most cities is congestion. It is so hard to move from place to place," said Winslow, whose expo team is called US Pavilion, a non-profit group appointed by the USA State Department to design the country's pavilion in Shanghai.

His idea of a great city is also one that has very good educational systems and a great cultural legacy. "The benefit of being in a city is having these meaningful public institutions. As much as I love the countryside, I would miss the cultural aspects of being in a city," he said.



designers' eyes

it how life is in their own cities.

Lands where history is beauty



Saint Family Church in Barcelona, Spain

By Chu Meng

Cities with some of the world's richest architectural heritage have become home to Benedetta Tagliabue, architect of the Spanish Pavilion.

Born in Milan, she received her bachelor's degree from the University of Venice. She then moved to New York to continue her studies and later joined the architectural studio Enric Miralles, where she is now a partner.

"I have been very lucky in this sense, having always managed to live and work in wonderful cities. Venice was an exceptional experience and a great school of architecture," she said.

Right before the Barcelona Olympic Games in 1992, Tagliabue moved the firm's offices to the southeastern Spanish city, where she married her partner at the firm and fellow architect, Enric Miralles.

She describes Barcelona as "another city of great historical heritage," where ancient buildings exist side by side with modern skyscrapers.

"Because of the Second World War, history left its imprint on nearly every piece of stone there. For instance, although Italy and Spain are both in the Mediterranean, there are great differences in their architecture. (Spain's) post-Franco years were full of energy, passion and enthusiasm, a perfect recipe for quality architecture," Tagliabue said.

Considering practical questions

By Wang Yu

G.G. Kirchner, architect of Luxembourg's Pavilion, a native of Germany, says he loves big cities, having grown up in Bremen and Stuttgart, which he describes as 'big' cities in northern and southern Germany. Both have a population of close to 600,000.

He now lives in Trier, the oldest town in the country, with 100,000 inhabitants. It is probably best known as the hometown of Karl Marx.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Kirchner says architects were convinced cars would dictate the future of urban design. Not anymore. "The main architect of Brasil (Brazil's capital), Oscar Niemeyer, said he would do the whole city again in the same way, but without cars," Kirchner says.

"The biggest problems in the cities of the future will be traffic and fresh water supply. Everybody should consider the questions, 'Is it really necessary to use a car for such a small distance? Is it really necessary to use so much water every day?' No city can make life better, only we can do that," he says.

A city with personality

By Wang Yu

Viorel Isticioia, ambassador of Romania, once lived in Bucharest, the capital and the country's largest city.

"People in Bucharest like to commune with nature. Some of those who live downtown have summer houses or villas in the countryside. They spend weekends there, growing vegetables and enjoying other unprocessed foods," Isticioia says.

Those who cannot afford homes in the country still go there to fish and hunt, traditional pastimes in Romania. "Even young people like doing these things," the ambassador says.

"It's comfortable to live in a big city, but it's also difficult due to problems like pollution and the growing population," Isticioia says, acknowledging these as universal problems of urbanization. He said Romania cannot offer China a solution because "different places face different situations."

But he does offer pointers to building better urban communities. "I think a city should have its own lifestyle, its own personality to reflect its natural surroundings. Residents should also pitch in to serve the common interest, like considering what the city might look like in the future before buying a car," Isticioia says.

Bucharest in Romania
CFP Photos

High-quality life in a compact environment



Singapore

By Annie Wei

Singaporean architect Tan Kay Ngee, designer of the Singapore Pavilion, said his home city is his top choice of place to live.

"It's an ideal place to live, learn, work and play. Our long-term approach to urban planning has seen us make the most appropriate use of every available space, and yet, strike a balance between supporting economic growth and maintaining a high-quality life," he said.

"Our experience shows that it's possible for a dense and land-scarce city to become a vibrant, highly livable global city," said Tan, who is also an author of *Revisiting Strawberryfields* (2006) and *Magnetic Fields of Cities* (2008).

"Revisiting Strawberryfields was about my experience in England and Istanbul, while *Magnetic Fields of Cities* was about the search to discover what makes a city attractive," Tan said.

Events

Belgium

Diamond Exhibition

The exhibition will showcase 50 of the world's top diamond designers. Sales profits will go to charity.

Where: Belgian Pavilion

When: May - October

France

Romantic Wedding

Couples who visit the French Pavilion in their wedding dress will receive a French Pavilion Romantic Wedding marriage certificate and a gift. They will also be eligible to join a raffle; the winner will get a free dream vacation to France.

Where: French Pavilion

When: May - October

Luxembourg

Luxembourg Day

There will be a show featuring dance performances and music as varied as classical piano and jazz. A temporary exhibition of works by Luxembourg artists will be held at the pavilion tower. Watch out for more special events.

Where: Romanian Pavilion

When: October 10

Nepal

Buddha Exhibition

Nepal will exhibit a hair and tooth relic of the Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism. The relics, worshipped by Nepalese Buddhists every day, are national treasures that have never been taken out of the country.

Where: Nepalese Pavilion

When: June - July

Sweden

Discovery, Fashion and New Identity fashion show

The catwalk parade will feature the latest Swedish fashion trends and evening dress through designs by Swedish brands like H&M, J. Lindeberg and Acen Jeans.

Where: River South Art Center, 1247 Nan Suzhou Lu, Huangpu District, Shanghai

When: April 9 - May 13

Tel: 021-6359 8989

UK

BBC Worldwide Concert

The BBC Symphony Orchestra will serenade expo visitors, with favorite BBC Natural History programs playing in the background.

Where: Expo Park

When: May 19

Brand and Design Communication Workshops

The workshops will provide attendees with the tools to think more comprehensively about their communication strategy and to realize the impact of effective communication. Focus will be on Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, Food and Drug Administration and Health, Education and Environmental Protection.

Where: UK Pavilion

When: May 26

Oxford University Dramatic Society

The event will consist of a theater production at the Expo Park, and a master class and workshops on studying drama in the UK.

Where: UK Pavilion

When: September 6

English National Ballet

To celebrate UK National Day, the English National Ballet will perform with the Shanghai Ballet.

Where: UK Pavilion

When: September 8



Technology makes a better life

World expositions have been excellent venues for participating nations to showcase their technological innovations alongside their cultural heritage.

Germany



Lennart Wiechell,
chief architect of the pavilion

Innovations make a 'balancity'

By He Jianwei

A city can only be a good place to live if it strikes a balance between renewal and preservation, innovation and tradition, urbanity and nature, community and individual development, and work and leisure: this is the message of "balancity," a term coined by German Pavilion organizers to mean "a city in balance."

Balancity is shown in the pavilion's architecture. Four huge silver sheets create a roof over the entire German Pavilion area, offering visitors shade from the sun and protection from the rain.

Besides having a practical purpose, they also reflect a philosophy: the interplay between carrying and being carried, between leaning on and supporting. Each structure is precariously balanced, but when joined with the others, it finally becomes stable.

"To the onlooker, it seems as if the silver structures are well balanced," Lennart Wiechell, chief architect of the pavilion, said, "However, when on its own, each would topple over."

The pavilion was designed to be a walk-through sculpture with no defined interior or exterior, unlike a "traditional" building.

For visitors, the journey will start at a

makeshift harbor, through gardens, parks, a town planning office and factory, past the opera hall toward the power plant. It is a microcosm of a real city.

"We had to come up with a design that was in line with the theme (Better City, Better Life). At the same time, the exterior of the building had to make a big impact and be easily recognizable," Wiechell said.

Balancity is also reflected in the seats in the VIP area. "Thanks to their flexible design, they can be converted from individual chairs to audience seating for a presentation, depending on how the lounge is used," Wiechell said.

The pavilion will be Germany's largest ever at a world expo. It will also showcase elements of German urban life and how the country's products and designs can help solve the universal problems of urbanization.

A highlight of the pavilion will be a conical structure housing a revolving 3-meter metal ball covered with 40,000 LEDs, which lights up when it senses noise and movement.

The ball contains a complex mechanism, devised by researchers from Stuttgart University. It enables the 1.2-ton device to react to shouting by swinging to and fro and moving in a circular motion. It will come

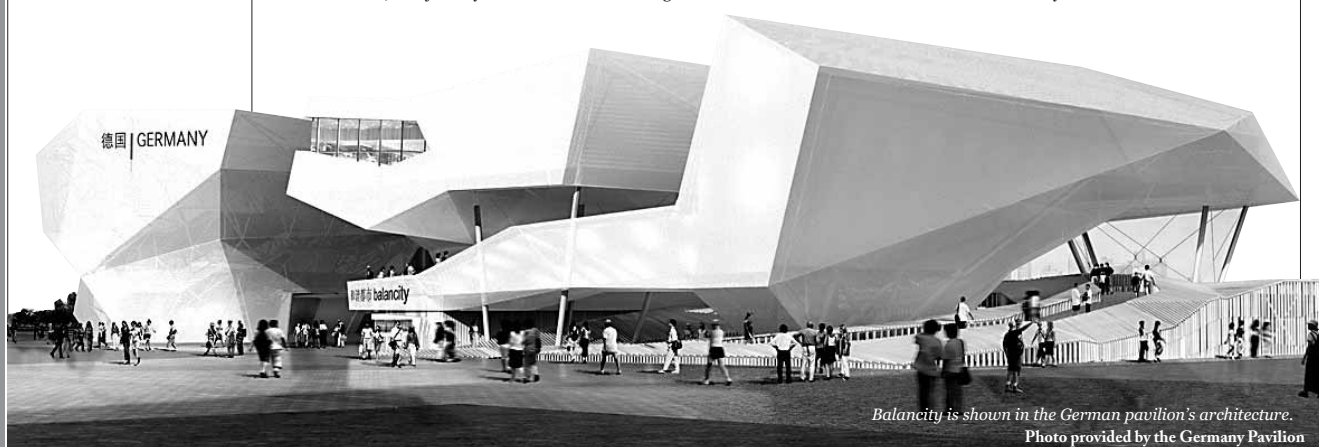
alive once hundreds of visitors stream into the pavilion.

Another highlight is the "city factory," which will showcase innovations that enhance urban living – products, technology and methods devised by German institutions and companies.

One company involved in the industry is Festo AG & Co. KG, which develops flexible, lightweight and energy-efficient automated products using the principles of biomechanics: an applied interdisciplinary science that aims to integrate elements of mechanics, electronics and biology.

Festo's FinGripper, derived from the movements of a fish's tail fin, can securely grip and deposit fragile or irregularly shaped objects. The AquaPenguin, inspired by the movements of penguin, can move effortlessly in the water with minimal energy and maneuver cramped spaces. Equipped with 3D sonar system, it opens up new fields of application in mechanical handling technology.

Using its pavilion, Germany wants to show the world it remains at the forefront of technological innovation that features perfect function, world-class aesthetics, better ergonomics, with a strong focus on sustainability.



Balancity is shown in the German pavilion's architecture.
Photo provided by the Germany Pavilion

Czech



Kumbarova Miloslava,
deputy coordinator for the
Shanghai Expo

'Fruits of Civilization'

By Zhao Hongyi

The Czech Republic's pavilion will have rubber ice-hockey pucks on its facade. Pucks are a significant Czech export and ice hockey is the national sport, said Kumbarova Miloslava, the republic's deputy coordinator for the Shanghai Expo.

The Czech Republic's exhibition, themed "Fruits of Civilization," will showcase new technologies, renewable energy and transport solutions.

Visitors to the pavilion will experience a magical city modeled on Prague's Old Town, with cobblestone streets and grassy patches. Visitors can "create and perform magic, travel



Fruits of Civilization is the theme for the pavilion.
Photo provided by the Czech Pavilion

and participate" in activities, said Pavel Stehlik, commissioner general of the pavilion.

Video of factories will be projected on the

wall, while music plays in the background and various scents waft in the air, giving visitors a complete sensory experience. There will also be a video of a lake surrounded by fast-growing vegetation to raise awareness about environmental protection.

To come up with the pavilion design, the Czech Republic launched a nationwide design competition, which was won by film production company Dekor. It was the same firm that produced the James Bond film *Casino Royale* and that designed the republic's pavilion at the Aichi Expo in 2005 and the Hanover Expo in 2000.

The government has earmarked 57 million yuan for the pavilion's design.

Continued on page 11 ...



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Belgium-EU

'Brain cell' full of vitality



Alain Nandrin,
chief designer of the EU Pavilion



Christine Conix,
chief designer of the
Belgium Pavilion

By Han Manman

A spongy, vein-like passageway leading to a semitransparent "brain cell" is expected to be the main attraction at the Belgium-European Union Pavilion, a structure that signifies progress through technical innovation.

With Belgium's relatively small population of 11 million and its position this year as head of the 27-nation EU, it decided to join forces with the bloc to showcase its achievements in science and the arts and present an "Intelligent Europe."

The giant brain cell

"The most striking feature of our pavilion is undoubtedly the brain cell," Christine Conix, chief designer of the Belgium Pavilion, said. "Since the Expo 2010 will remain open in the evening, we can emphasize the shape of the brain cell with internal and projected lighting, producing a multitude of visual effects."

Visitors will enter the pavilion through a "vein" path leading to the center of the semitransparent cell, from where they can look over the entire pavilion's interior. The vein and the cell are made from a new fiber-like material, and visitors will feel like they are walking on a soft surface, Conix said.

"The design of the pavilion is meant to reflect the basic characteristics of the Belgian people, who maintain a low profile and are formal on the outside but are full of vitality and creativity inside," she said.

Chocolate and diamonds rule

Belgium is synonymous with Belgian chocolate, so no Belgian Pavilion will be complete without it.

The chocolates on exhibit will be shaped like the Great Wall and the Shanghai Oriental Pearl TV Tower, said Myriam Cops, general director of the Belgian-EU Pavilion. She said representatives from a Belgian chocolate factory will show visitors how the goodies are made, then give free samples.

"Making our world-famous pralines is true craftsmanship, and we are convinced it will be very interesting and fun to see what our chocolatiers can do with chocolate," Cops said.

A diamond factory will also show guests how an unremarkable stone is turned into a glittering diamond.

The pavilion organizers are excited about the upcoming expo, but Cops admitted that they are under a lot of pressure as they are working within a tight schedule.

"We actually started building very late. This is a project in which a lot of partners and companies were involved in the decision making." But she said they are expecting to finish construction next month and begin with interior decoration.

EU showcase

A fifth of Belgium's Pavilion space is allotted to the EU exhibition.

At its core will be the "cyclorama," a gigantic 360-degree film screen, which will

present various aspects of European urban life, said Alain Nandrin, chief designer of the EU Pavilion.

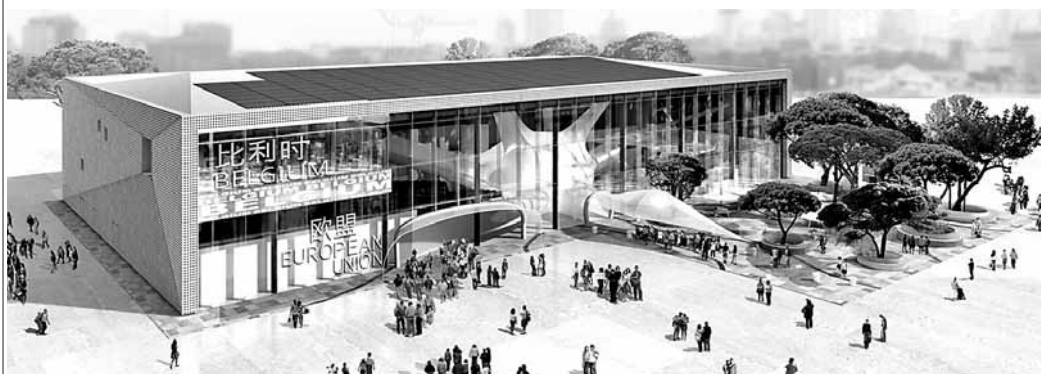
"The idea is to communicate with visitors the feeling of what it's like to live in European cities, where 'Better City, Better Life' is not only a motto, but a way of life," he said.

European urban residents are very conscious of environmental protection in their daily lives, "which is why the biggest part of the exhibition is called 'green attitude,'" Nandrin said.

The exhibition shows Europe's changing approach to the environment: in decades past, European governments decided to stop their heavy pollution of the continent, at present they are trying to promote more eco-friendly lifestyles and encouraging the development of "green" products through cutting-edge research and technology.

Nandrin admitted that the exhibition design gave him his share of headaches. He said the biggest challenge was condensing information about the 27-member group into something visitors could digest within 10 to 15 minutes.

The EU has far-ranging and ambitious projects, as diverse as safeguarding the quality of drinking water to vetting mergers between companies and providing aid to developing nations. "Reducing all that to a few headlines that would be interesting but not oversimplified was tough," Nandrin said.



Chocolate and diamonds rule the pavilion.

Photo provided by the Belgium Pavilion

S Korea



Joon Sang Chang,
director of South Korea's
Expo team

Culture and the future

By Zhao Hongyi

South Korea will present blueprints of its future cities along with its most advanced technologies and traditional culture at its largest expo pavilion ever.

The country, always among the most popular exhibitors at world expos, will have the second-largest pavilion next to China's at the Shanghai Expo.

The design of the three-story building features the 20 basic Korean characters, one of the Korean people's greatest inventions, said Joon Sang Chang, director of South Korea's Expo team. The pavilion's logo and mascot also feature Korean characters.

The facade of the 140-million-yuan pavilion will be decorated with eco-friendly synthetic resin. Part of the material will be converted into shopping bags for visitors.

South Korea's exhibition, themed "Friendly City, Colorful Life," will center on four subjects: science and technology, nature, culture and humanism. Besides music, dance and food, the displays will also show ordinary



Korean characters adorn the South Korean Pavilion.

Photo provided by South Korean Pavilion

Korean life. There will also be a section on plans for the 2012 Expo in Yeosu, a southern coastal city.

Meanwhile, 15 South Korean corporations have banded to set up their own pavilion, which will showcase their newest products and technological innovations.

South Korea has attended 17 world expos since 1962. It won "Best Pavilion" at the 2005 Aichi Expo in Japan and "Most Popular Pavilion" at the 2008 Zaragoza Expo in Spain. South Korea is expecting to welcome 5 million visitors to its pavilion this year.

Continued on page 12 ...

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Iceland

Cooling down humid Shanghai



Gunnar Gunnarsson, ambassador of Iceland and the country's commissioner general to the expo

By Huang Daohen

2008 was not a good year for Iceland, which was pummeled by economic crisis. But the country has not allowed difficult times to spoil its party at the Shanghai Expo. Though it cuts its expo budget by half to 13.6 million yuan, Iceland is gearing up for a whizbang showcase.

The pavilion, designed like an ice cube and resembling the Beijing Olympic Village's Water Cube, will present energy-saving technology, tourism, and design and innovation under the theme, "Pure Energy – Healthy Living."

Icelandic participation

Because of its financial troubles, including the collapse of its three biggest banks in late 2008, many doubted Iceland would make an appearance at the Shanghai Expo.

But the Icelandic Parliament still granted the equivalent of 7 million yuan to the project, which was inked on January 11, 2008. The total cost of designing and running the pavilion is estimated at 13.6 million yuan.

In late 2008, a national competition was held to solicit ideas for the pavilion's design. Submissions were evaluated based on innovation and functionality, as well as unity and compatibility with the expo organizers' spatial specifications, said Pall Hjaltonson of Plus Arkitektar, a design company that won the project.

A cool little Iceland

The concept for the pavilion was to create an "ice cube" with a backlit printed fabric exterior. The design seeks to explain the fundamental connection between nature and energy on the one hand, and the relationship between the Icelandic people, urban areas and culture on the other hand, said Hjaltonson, its chief designer.

Inside, a high-definition short film will be projected on to white screens along the walls and ceiling, akin to an image and sound capsule. "The idea is to bring visitors to Iceland," Hjaltonson said.

To push the idea further, the temperature will be lowered and the air dehumidified. "Visitors to our pavilion will get the feeling they're entering a cool, refreshing sanctuary within the hot and humid city of Shanghai," the designer said.

The front entrance will be decorated with Icelandic lava stones, beside TV monitors displaying

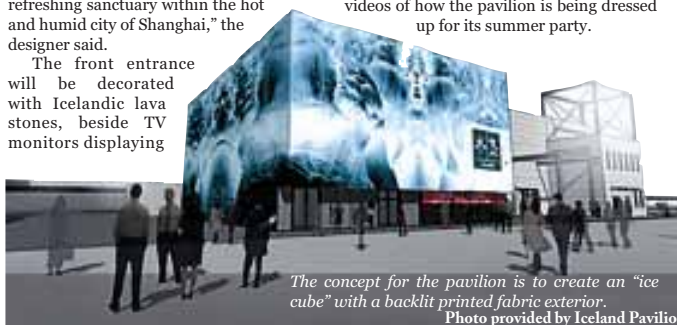
information on Iceland's nature, culture and economy.

Seeking business

The Icelandic pavilion, situated beside those of other Nordic countries, will include a business center to assist Icelandic companies seeking information about the Chinese market and how to expand their network here.

Iceland is convinced the Shanghai Expo will help the country find its way out of the economic gloom, said Gunnar Gunnarsson, ambassador of Iceland and the country's commissioner general to the expo.

The Icelandic pavilion is one of the few with an official page on Facebook, a simple yet effective strategy to build a community of expo fans. The page includes pictures and videos of how the pavilion is being dressed up for its summer party.



The concept for the pavilion is to create an "ice cube" with a backlit printed fabric exterior.

Photo provided by Iceland Pavilion

Japan



Yutaka Hikosaka, the pavilion's architect

Eco-friendly 'purple silkworm'

By Zhao Hongyi

The Japanese Pavilion, nicknamed "purple silkworm island," is the epitome of the 21st century: stylish, high tech and environmentally friendly.

The pavilion is one of the Shanghai Expo's largest and Japan's largest ever at 24 meters high, said Hiroshi Tsukamoto, commissioner general of the pavilion.

The semicircular pavilion prides itself in using clean energy – solar energy – to demonstrate how technology can improve lives while also protecting the planet.

"Due to the fact that most of the pavilions in the expos have a life expectancy of only six months, we tried to bring advanced technology into the 'worm,'" Yutaka Hikosaka, the pavilion's architect said.

Technology improves lives, but humans should ensure its use is guided by love of the

earth and the welfare of future generations, Hiroshi said.

The pavilion's motto, "Smile to Smile," shows "the importance of connectedness, particularly human connections – a key message of the Japanese pavilion," he said.

The pavilion's exhibition, which focuses on harmony between humans and technology, will be divided into three zones: the past, the present and the future.

The first zone will show Japanese envoys visiting China during the Tang Dynasty (618–907).

The next zone will feature exhibits on six wide-ranging subjects: compassion for nature and life, issues facing city dwellers, water resource problems, global warming, aging populations and connections between people.

The third zone will discuss technology

that nurtures connections between people and developments, and enjoying the afterglow. Sophisticated energy-saving technologies will be on display too.

The pavilion will also house a small theater with its own exhibit. Japan is famed for its traditional performing arts.

But one of the pavilion's biggest attractions is expected to be Japanese-made intelligent robots, said an official who declined to reveal more information, saying he did not want to ruin the surprise.

As the host of the 2005 Aichi Expo, Japan has learned valuable lessons about holding the world fair. "We'll face many unexpected problems, such as the huge flow of visitors every day," the commissioner general, Hiroshi, said. "But there should be no big problems as long as we are prepared and competent."

The pavilion focuses on the harmony between humans and technology.

Photo provided by Japan Pavilion



BQ
北京青年周刊

2010年2月4日
BQ情人节特刊
《爱在第一天》浪漫登场

2010年春节大年初一恰逢西方情人节
意味着这将是充满爱的一年
BQ诚邀天下有情人从新年第一天就开始 好好爱

Revival of traditional culture

Pakistan

Diversity of people in an ancient fort



Masood Khan, the Pakistani ambassador and commissioner general of the pavilion

By Zhang Dongya

An ancient fort in a modern metropolis is an uncommon sight, but that is exactly what Pakistan has brought to the Shanghai Expo: a pavilion that is a replica of Lahore Fort.

The fort, which dates back to 1025, has become the cultural capital of Pakistan. To resist foreign invasions, it was rebuilt in 1566 by Emperor Akbar of the Mughal Dynasty (1526-1857) and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1981.

"It has played an important role in the country's history and symbolizes the traditional roots of present-day urban life," said Masood Khan, the Pakistani ambassador and commissioner general of the pavilion.

The pavilion, located across from the Chinese pavilion, was designed based on the sub-theme "harmony in diversity," which reflects the makeup of Pakistan's population, Khan said.

"Pakistan com-

prises four provinces and different ethnic and linguistic groups... When people from Balochistan, North West Frontier Province, Sindh and Punjab move into cities, they form part of one fabric," he said.

About 20 percent of Pakistan's population is composed of urban dwellers who are scattered in main cities, such as the capital Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Quetta.

This diversity is reflected in the pavilion's architecture, which incorporates some of the best historical and cultural elements from various Pakistani cities.

The two-story pavilion has a huge national flag on the roof, which can be clearly seen from the neighboring Chinese pavilion.

In the Pakistan pavilion, visitors will be able to experi-

ence the life of a typical Pakistani through visual and multimedia presentations. Exhibits include reproductions of Pakistani polo, the most popular sport in the country, as well as the Silk Road of 5,000 years ago - a trade route that began in what is now Xi'an, Shanxi Province.

The building has five exhibition halls on the first floor showing cultures from all Pakistani provinces, the country's achievements in science and technology, industry, education, economy and the relationship between urban and rural life.

Displays also include the lives of common people, prominent personalities, as well as majestic sceneries. There is also a special section featuring Pakistani women's achievements in the past few decades.

A corner will be dedicated to Sino-Pakistan relations, including a wall of photos showing meetings between leaders of the

two nations in the past 30 years.

On the second floor, there will be performances of traditional Pakistani dances, while a restaurant will serve traditional cuisine such as barbecues with special sauces and chai, a local milk tea.

"You will find vignettes of a unique land and its people, and you will get excellent food and Indus Valley artifacts," Khan said.

The main firm coordinating the construction and running of the pavilion is the Pakistan-based Far East Oriental Trading Company (FEOTC), which has a core team of 10 members shuttling between Shanghai and Karachi, Pakistan's largest city.

FEOTC developed the blueprint, with Chinese company SNERDI in charge of architectural design and Shanghai-based LVS Exhibition Company working on the interior design.



Exhibition on Buddhism in Pakistan's Pavilion

Photos provided by Pakistan Embassy

Nepal

Seeking the soul of a city

By Li Zhixin

"Nepalese people believe any city that has heart - love, care, tolerance and harmony - is a good city. No matter how big and developed a city is, if it lacks heart, it cannot be a good city," Binayak Shah, director of the Nepal Pavilion, said.

Thus, the pavilion seeks to introduce the heart, as well as the "soul," of Kathmandu, the national capital, and present its milestones in visual art, architecture and cultural development in the past 2,000 years.

Other exhibits will highlight Nepal's efforts to protect the environment, develop renewable energy resources and encourage "green architecture" as the way to the future, Shah said.

The pavilion,

located across from the Chinese Pavilion, is called "Nepal Araniko Center," named after a 13th century Nepalese construction master who helped promote Sino-Nepali relations by building the Great White Pagoda at Miaoying Temple in Beijing. The Nepal Pavilion, covering an area of 3,600 square meters, was designed to look like one of Araniko's creations.

"The pavilion reflects the urban development of Nepal while showing parts of the city as it was at the time of Araniko," Shah said.

He said elements

of Buddhism and Hinduism, major religions in Nepal, will also feature in the building. "But the pavilion will show Buddhism as a culture rather than a religion."

The pavilion's landscape will resemble Kathmandu's natural surroundings: the world's highest peak Mt. Everest, Buddha's birthplace Lumbini, green mountains and valleys, tranquil glacier lakes and blue rivers. Meanwhile, indigenous flowers will be planted in the pavilion's garden.

Narendra Mool, 37, one of the engineers, said working on the pavilion reminded



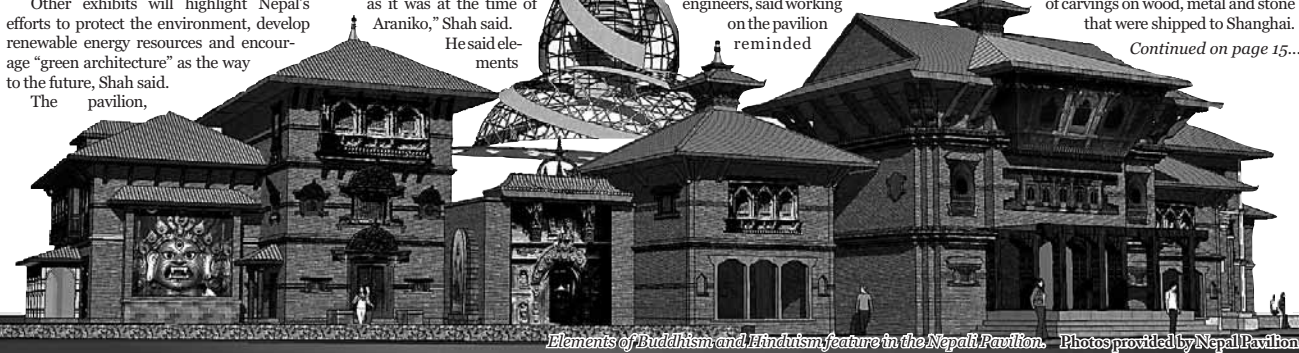
Binayak Shah, director of the Nepal Pavilion

him of his teen-age years when he visited various places to paint the landscapes of Kathmandu, the city's scenery and the Himalayas.

"All these elements can be found in the pavilion," he said. "It's really incredible to recall childhood memories here."

The pavilion's construction crew included five architects and engineers and dozens of Nepali craftsmen and carpenters. More than 300 craftsmen in Kathmandu also participated in the project, producing 500 tons of carvings on wood, metal and stone that were shipped to Shanghai.

Continued on page 15...



Elements of Buddhism and Hinduism feature in the Nepali Pavilion. Photos provided by Nepal Pavilion

... continued from page 14

Thailand

Tourism and harmony



Issara Somchai, minister of Social Development and Human Security

By Huang Daohen

What does it mean to be Thai? This is the question the Thai government wants to answer through its expo pavilion.

"Being Thai very often means living in harmony with one's neighbors, as well as kindness and willingness to help friends in need," a statement on the pavilion website said.

The pavilion also aims to show the world a comprehensive picture of Thailand's unique culture, it said.

"This is the right time for Thailand to display its culture and its vision of an eco-friendly society," said Issara Somchai, minister of Social Development and Human Security. The ministry is in charge of organizing and preparing the country's pavilion for the Shanghai Expo.

Participating in the expo is a significant

opportunity to promote Thai tourism and to revive the Thai economy, said Issara, who estimated the pavilion will receive 6 million visitors and will become one of the expo's most visited.

The pavilion's exhibition area consists of three halls: Journey of Harmony, Harmony of Different Tones and Harmony of Thais.

While the exhibition's theme is, "Thainess: Sustainable Ways of Life," focus will be on "unity" and "harmony," Issara said. Unity reflects the respect of people from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds for the three pillars of Thai society: nation, religion and monarchy; harmony refers to the ability of Thais to live in harmony with nature and the environment, the ministry said.

The first exhibition hall introduces visitors to the Thai way of life. Visitors will be invited to "travel back in time" to experience the Thai lifestyle of ancient times and the melding of different peoples and cultures.

The exhibits also tell the story of the Thais' affinity with rivers and canals that provide nour-

ishment and means of transport, and the cycle of life that flourishes beside these waterways.

Hall two depicts the long-standing interaction between Thailand and other countries, including imperial China and the China of today.

The exhibits highlight the interaction between urban and rural Thai communities. Despite the economic disparity between the city and villages, Thais continue to share a common trait: the love of peace and harmony. "That's the spirit of Thai culture," Issara said.

The last hall summarizes the exhibition's message. Here, visitors will be shown the defining aspects of being Thai.

Despite the new technologies adopted in the pavilion's construction and employed in its exhibits, deep down in the soul of every Thai is a deep regard for a life of simplicity, Issara said. "We believe it is the only path that will lead to lasting happiness," he said.

Another attraction at the pavilion will be its mascot, Tai. The design of the cheerful, friendly and adorable child-giant was inspired by the mythical giant Indrajit, a traditional iconic figure with a fierce gaze often seen gracing Thai temple doorways.

Tai will greet visitors at the pavilion with a smile, and his big round eyes mirror kindness and compassion, as hospitable as the people of Thailand.

The Shanghai Expo is a chance for Thailand to promote its tourism and to revive the economy.

Photo provided by Thailand Pavilion



China

Red colors and traditional gardens

By Annie Wei

The most charming feature of the China Pavilion is its traditional wooden architecture, said He Jingtang, the pavilion's chief designer.

Visitors will see *dougong* brackets: beams intersecting at right angles. This construction design, dating back 2,000 years, enhances the building's stability. Many buildings in the Forbidden City and the Summer Place feature roofs with *dougong*.

Another distinguishing element of the China Pavilion is its red color – seven shades of red.

Different shades of red will be used on different levels of the building to make the pavilion look a uniform color under the sun, said Ni Yang, the pavilion's deputy chief designer. The shade of red will become darker the higher up you go, he said.

Ni said the color will not fade for the next 30 years, and even if does, it will be unnoticeable.

The design team originally planned to paint the pavilion a single shade of red, but this would have made it

look like it was painted in different shades because of its irregular shape, Ni said.

The team spent more than six months trying to find the perfect reds, Yao Jianping, the project manager, said. They collected more than 100 shade samples, some from the Forbidden City.

The main color is "gugong (Forbidden City) red," which represents the spirit of traditional Chinese culture, He said. Other parts of the pavilion will be covered in glass.

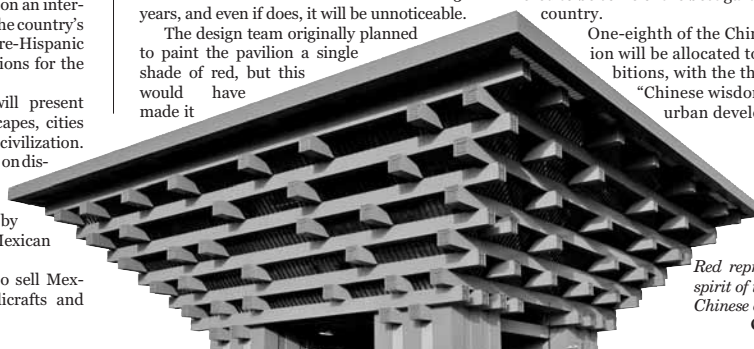
Ni said their design hoped to capture not only a very Chinese flavor, but also to evoke in visitors a sense of "enthusiasm" and "progress."

The landscape design will reproduce the look of Jiannan gardens, found in southern cities like Yangzhou and Suzhou and considered to be some of the best gardens in the country.

One-eighth of the China Pavilion will be allocated to exhibitions, with the theme, "Chinese wisdom in urban development."

Red represents the spirit of traditional Chinese culture.

CFP Photo



Mexico

Forest of kites

By Zhao Hongyi

One hundred thirty-five kites in a rainbow of colors will fly from the ground of the Mexican pavilion, while its three-level underground exhibition halls will showcase the country's history, culture and future plans, said Marina Nikolic, the pavilion's press officer.

The kites represent big dreams and the strong bond between Mexico and China, said Eduardo Seldner, commissioner general of the pavilion. The kites will come in various sizes; some will be as long as 13 meters, others as short as 2.4 meters.

"All the materials will be made of recycled plastic," Edgar Ramirez, the pavilion's architect, said.

The pavilion will sell kites and teach visitors how to make Mexican kites, which they can fly from the pavilion's grass-covered square.

"The square is the heart of the pavilion. It represents our vision for the children's future," Seldner said.

The patch of land is also a place for visitors to read, seek shade or soak in the sunshine, and hold a picnic, Ramirez said.

The design revolves around the theme, "Restore the Green to Cities," the quest for quality life in an urban setting, the architect said. Here, there are spaces made specifically for relaxation, like parks and green areas.

But the main parts of the Mexican pavilion will be located underground, a feature that makes it stand out from other pavilions at the expo.

"Once you enter the floors underground, you enter the history of Mexico," Ramirez said.

Visitors will be taken on an interactive media journey of the country's rich history, from the pre-Hispanic era to the present to visions for the future.

Other exhibitions will present Mexico's culture, landscapes, cities and its ancient Mayan civilization. Some Mayan relics will go on display, including masks, decorations and accessories, as well as works by popular contemporary Mexican painters.

The pavilion will also sell Mexican food, wines, handicrafts and books.





Outstanding buildings of the Expo Park



- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Mexico | 7. Ireland | 13. Thailand | 19. Pakistan |
| 2. Venezuela | 8. Sweden | 14. Theme Pavilion | 20. UAE |
| 3. US | 9. Finland | 15. MeteoWorld Pavilion | 21. India |
| 4. Canada | 10. UK | 16. Expo Center | 22. Performance Center |
| 5. Luxembourg | 11. Germany | 17. Expo Boulevard | 23. Japan |
| 6. Romania | 12. Poland | 18. China | |

Illustration by Chen Xingxing